

{In Archive} hydraulic fracturing in the news

Beth Wagner to: Brian Graves, Ken-E Johnson, Michael Bechdol, Michael Overbay, Mike Frazier, Ray Leissner, Susie McKenzie, 06/19/2012 12:08 PM
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Inhofe wants IG investigation of Range case

Mike Soraghan, E&E reporter Energywire Published: Tuesday, June 19, 2012

Sen. James Inhofe (R-Okla.) is continuing to lead the charge against U.S. EPA's now-dismissed Texas water contamination case against Range Resources Corp.

In a letter being sent today by Inhofe and five other Republican senators, the senator asks EPA Inspector General Arthur Elkins to investigate the decision to file an emergency order against the Fort Worth, Texas, company. http://www.eenews.net/assets/2012/06/19/document_daily_02.pdf

"We are concerned with the procedural and decision-making process the agency followed both publicly and internally leading up to the order's issuance and through its subsequent withdrawal," wrote the six senators, including both senators from Texas.

Dallas-based Regional Administrator Al Armendariz, who brought the case, resigned in April after Inhofe circulated a 2-year-old video of remarks Armendariz had made at a town hall meeting. In it, Armendariz compared his strategy of making examples of violators to Roman conquerors' strategy to "crucify" random villagers.

The video took on added significance after EPA dropped the Range case in March. Critics of the action cited it as confirmation that Armendariz had gone after Range with flawed evidence.

Armendariz issued the emergency order in December 2010 charging that Range Resources had allowed natural gas from its wells to leak into two homes in the Fort Worth suburbs. He ordered Range to fix the problem and supply water to the families.

An EPA spokesman did not respond immediately to an after-hours request for comment.

Click here to read the letter. http://www.eenews.net/assets/2012/06/19/document_daily_02.pdf

Exxon exits Poland projects after disappointing test results

Jenny Mandel, E&E reporter Energywire Published: Tuesday, June 19, 2012

Exxon Mobil Corp. has withdrawn from exploration activities in Poland, once the great hope of the European shale gas industry, with the announcement that commercially viable oil and gas reserves have not been found.

"We have completed exploration operations in Poland after fulfilling all work program requirements with our co-venture partner and in compliance with all environmental regulations," the company said in an

emailed statement. "There have been no demonstrated sustained commercial hydrocarbon flow rates in our two wells in the Lublin and Podlasie basins."

About a year ago, a report by the U.S. Energy Department's Energy Information Administration intensified already-simmering interest in the country when it revealed that Poland had the greatest quantity of technically recoverable shale gas in Europe, with 187 trillion cubic feet -- enough to last more than 300 years at current consumption rates.

But a report published in March by the country's Polish Geological Institute, with support from the U.S. Geological Survey, found dramatically different results -- estimating that the country sits on 12 trillion to 27 trillion cubic feet of recoverable shale gas resources, or six to 15 times less than the EIA assessment (EnergyWire, April 30).

Still, within Poland, many people held out hope that the country could wean itself off a heavy reliance on gas from Russia, a historical adversary that, as recently as 2009, turned off gas spigots to Europe during a bitterly cold winter over contract disputes.

The announcement that Exxon Mobil is leaving the country will further dampen hopes that the country could become energy independent. Last week, the government was reported to have hastily canceled the release of a proposed legal framework for shale gas development that would have started to clarify the framework under which producers could expect to operate. That would help companies secure the financial commitments needed to move forward with drilling projects.

As France, the United Kingdom, Bulgaria and others have moved to limit hydraulic fracturing activities out of concern over the potential for water contamination and man-made earthquakes, Poland has appeared to be a best bet for the industry given its open-armed welcome and impressive reserve estimates. But the nation has limited natural gas infrastructure that makes it an expensive place to operate relative to the United States, and poor results from early drilling tests could chase developers away.

Other multinational companies, including Chevron Corp. and Marathon Oil Corp., also have holdings in Poland and have been tight-lipped about their own initial results.

Sliding oil prices trigger slowdown worries in Texas

Nathanial Gronewold, E&E reporter Energywire Published: Tuesday, June 19, 2012

HOUSTON -- A softening international crude oil price has some in the Texas oil and gas industry worried over a possible slowdown in drilling in the state.

An economist with the Texas Alliance of Energy Producers issued an analysis of his monthly Texas Petro Index (TPI) that expressed concern over the two-month plunge in the per-barrel oil price caused by worries over the still-unresolved European debt crisis. West Texas Intermediate crude oil prices have slid from \$106 a barrel since the beginning of May to \$83 per barrel in trading at the New York Mercantile Exchange yesterday.

Texas Alliance of Energy Producers economist Karr Ingham said the decline in oil prices has arrested the steady growth in the year-over-year value of the monthly TPI seen since October 2009. The index is a measure of the vitality of the oil and gas industry in Texas, and the alliance considers it a precursor to future industry trends.

The value of the index stayed at 271.0 in April, Ingham said, the same place it was the month before. While that's still well above the recession-era low of 188.5 in December 2009, Ingham said that the lack of monthly increase could be a sign that Texas' booming oil and gas operations could be poised to slow in the months ahead should downward pressure on oil prices continue.

"The TPI for April was unchanged from March to April at 271.0, the first time since December 2009 the index did not post a month-to-month increase," Ingham said in a release. "So even though some indicators continued to increase through April, it is certainly possible we're on the cusp of a slowdown in

upstream oil and gas activity."

Texas' energy renaissance has been fueled by high oil prices and enhanced extraction techniques, particularly horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing, which allow companies to free up more crude oil than before from tighter geologic formations. Growth is strongest in the Eagle Ford Shale of south Texas and in the Permian Basin, a legendary west Texas oil patch.

The same innovations led to the natural gas boom, but collapsed pricing for North American gas has sent drillers flooding away from gas plays and into crude oil, where prices are more closely tied to international markets.

Most companies active in the shale and tight oil plays assumed they'd be operating in a longer-term environment where crude oil sold for \$80 to \$100 a barrel. Though international crude prices have been softening, the price for drilling in onshore plays has also been declining as robust competition by oil field service companies reduces costs to operators.

Ingham indicated that it would be difficult to predict how Texas oil and gas firms would respond to the new pricing environment.

"Producers don't have a solid sense about where the bottom may be, and that is making them a bit gun-shy and, perhaps, trigger-happy to curtail exploration and development drilling," he said.

Pawlenty joins frac sand firm's board of directors

Pamela King, E&E reporter Energywire Published: Tuesday, June 19, 2012

Former Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty has joined the board of directors for Smart Sand Inc., a company that supplies proppant materials to the oil and gas industry.

In his role on Smart Sand's board, the former Republican presidential candidate will help oversee the delivery of more sand to prop up shale rock cracks during hydraulic fracturing, which involves the injection of chemical-laced fluid into those fissures to coax out oil and natural gas. Demand for frac sand has caused a mining boom throughout the Midwest, including Wisconsin, where Smart Sand's quartz reserve is located, and Pawlenty's home state of Minnesota.

"Shale oil and gas is one of the fastest-growing sectors in the U.S. With proper stewardship, it will help solve our nation's energy crisis and dramatically boost our economy," Pawlenty said in a statement issued last week by Smart Sand. "I'm pleased to join Smart Sand at this very important time in the industry. The company provides a much-needed product, utilizes superior delivery logistics and is a leader in this critical industry. I look forward to collaborating with Smart Sand's talented and innovative team."

Smart Sand CEO Andrew Speaker said Pawlenty's experience managing Minnesota's natural resources has equipped the ex-governor with the knowledge necessary to help the company bring proppant supply up to pace with demand.

"We are honored to have Mr. Pawlenty join our board," Speaker said. "Having served as Minnesota governor for two terms, and with deep roots in the region, Tim is experienced in the oversight and development of our natural resources. Tim's experience in the energy and transportation sectors combined with his respect for the environment and the communities in which we operate makes him a strategic addition to our board. We look forward to drawing on his expertise as CEO of the great state of Minnesota as we continue to build our company."

State-owned water supplies could be opened for use by drillers

Energywire Published: Tuesday, June 19, 2012

Ohio's parks and forests could soon supply the water that drilling companies are demanding to conduct hydraulic fracturing on the state's Utica Shale wells.

Officials from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (DNR) are considering plans that would grant access to state-owned reservoirs, lakes and streams -- for a price.

Agency records and emails obtained by the Columbus Dispatch show that DNR officials, who manage state parks and forests as well as regulate drilling, have been discussing the issue for at least two months.

"Access to rivers: Can we charge and how much?" asks one undated memo circulated among agency officials. "Access to scenic rivers: Can we do this?"

Drilling companies require as much as 5 million gallons of water to fracture a single shale well. The water is mixed with sand and chemicals and is pumped into underground shale rock fractures to bring oil and natural gas to the surface.

Several companies have contracts with cities that allow the drillers to draw from drinking water reservoirs, but demand for water will continue to grow. Ohio estimates that by the end of 2015, there will be 2,250 shale wells.

Environmental groups say opening up access to more state water sources could strain drinking water supplies, boating and wildlife.

"These streams and watercourses are our playgrounds and our drinking water," said Cheryl Johncox, director of the Buckeye Forest Council. "I see this sell-off of our state resources as incredibly shortsighted."

The Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District announced June 7 that it will not sell water from six reservoirs until a water-availability study is completed (EnergyWire, June 12). District officials have asked the U.S. Geological Survey to study its Atwood, Clendening and Leesville reservoirs to assess the amount of excess water available for drillers.

DNR spokesman Carlo LoParo said the agency is still developing its water plans.

"Our goal is to develop a plan that will allow for the use of water if, based on a detailed analysis, withdrawal of that water does not cause a negative impact to navigation, recreation or wildlife," he said (Spencer Hunt, Columbus Dispatch, June 17). -- PK

Municipal officials demand more robust spill notification system

Energywire Published: Tuesday, June 19, 2012

Pennsylvania records show 134 oil, gas or chemical spills in the state since Jan. 1, 2011, but the state rarely, if ever, notified the public.

By law, it is not required to do so, but officials in affected Pennsylvania townships are now demanding notification.

Over the past year and a half, shale drilling resulted in at least 27 spills in 19 townships in the state's southwestern region, according to Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) records obtained by the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review.

DEP officials "don't tell us any more than they have to. I think we ... have a right to know," said Ed Barale, a supervisor in Amwell, Pa.

Department records show Texas-based Range Resources Corp. was responsible for a stream discharge, a drilling fluid leak and a brine spill from an overturned tanker in Amwell. Township officials learned of all three events weeks later from workers, Barale said.

DEP is revising its spill response policy, but the department received no complaints from municipal

officials during 60 days of public comment this spring, said DEP spokesman Kevin Sunday.

It is possible the state's records have been misinterpreted, he said. What DEP classified as a "stream discharge" in Amwell was actually 200 barrels of brine water in a roadside channel leading to a lined pond the company constructed to hold spills, Sunday said.

"It's just the way they have to enter these things in, which is very, very confusing," said Matt Pitzarella, Range's spokesman. "Unfortunately, you have mechanical errors, but they're engineered so that when these things happen, we're able to excavate it, and there's no impact to the environment, including the one with the stream."

Range agreed in April to pay \$18,025 for violations in Amwell and another town, but a resolution to this particular spill is pending, Pitzarella said.

Three Amwell families are suing the company and DEP, contending that Range's operations have caused environmental problems.

DEP is required to notify municipal officials about some spills that take more than 90 days to clean, and it must alert water users of any spill that might affect their supply, Sunday said. He said the department goes beyond its legal requirements by also notifying local officials during emergencies when violations pose a danger to public health or safety.

Companies are required to immediately report any spills that threaten to pollute state waterways, and they must eventually report all spills, Sunday said. Any brine spill of more than 5 gallons must be reported within two hours of detection, he said.

Municipal leaders in Center Township, Pa., want automatic notification of any event but have not found a way to mandate that, said Edward "Butch" Deter, chairman of the township's Board of Supervisors and president of its volunteer fire department.

"Anytime a company has to notify DEP, they should have to notify a municipal official," he said. "Let us know about everything, and we'll decide how we respond to it."

Pennsylvania could move toward such a system if a bipartisan measure to create a real-time network to alert county and state officials of any well-site problems passes the state House, said state Reps. Randy Vulakovich (R) and Bud George (D) (AP/Fuel Fix, June 16). -- PK

Service companies reeling from oversupply , price drops

Energywire Published: Tuesday, June 19, 2012

Hydraulic fracturing companies are taking a hit as years of tremendous success in the shale gas fields have caused prices for their services to slide.

Price tags on fracturing work have dropped as much as 20 percent from their peaks, leading to crew layoffs and idle equipment for businesses that ramped up work during the boom, companies say.

The technology of flushing high-pressure mixtures of water, sand and chemicals thousands of feet underground to break apart shale rocks has been key to the industry's recent success, but as production exploded, companies flooded the market with natural gas, leading demand to wane and prices to drop.

"There was this wave of supply coming on, too much supply," said Dennis Smith, director of corporate development for oil field services company Nabors Industries Inc. "It created, overnight, a big excess of pumping capacity."

Smith's company has idled four of the 10 pressure pumping crews it operated for short-term contracts. He said drops in pricing and job opportunities made it too expensive to keep crews on hand and equipment online.

Other service companies, most of which are based or have major operations in Houston, are also feeling the squeeze.

Patterson-UTI Energy Inc. anticipates pumping revenue drops of 20 percent this quarter. Schlumberger Ltd. has diverted money budgeted to expand North American fracturing projects to its international business. Baker Hughes Inc. stalled plans to buy more pressure pumping equipment.

There were 562 rigs operating in U.S. gas fields last week, compared with 870 a year earlier, according to the most recent data available from Baker Hughes.

Natural gas futures were down 2.8 cents at \$2.467 per million British thermal units Friday in New York trading. At the height of fracturing operations in 2008, values were around \$13 per MMBtu.

Companies have tried to shift into work in the oil fields, where production is more profitable, but the mass migration of service companies has saturated those markets, too, said Simmons & Co. International oil field services analyst John Daniel.

"Every time you go out there, more companies are opening up offices," he said. "Now, if you want to complete a well, you can go out and call a bunch of companies and get a quote."

Furthermore, moving crews and equipment to new locations is time-consuming and expensive. Equipment generates no revenue during its transportation, and many communities near oil fields are unprepared to handle a mass influx of workers.

"The logistics have not been easy at all," said FTS International CEO Marc Rowland.

Fracturing for liquid fuels has been less lucrative for FTS. In South Texas' liquids-rich Eagle Ford Shale, the company brings in about \$130,000 per round of well fracturing. By comparison, a typical job in the predominantly natural gas Haynesville Shale in Louisiana commanded \$300,000 at its peak.

As businesses scale back their gas operations and the oversupply moderates, companies are hoping the market will begin to rebound (Simone Sebastian, Fuel Fix, June 18). -- PK

Analytical study of hydraulic and mechanical effects on tide -induced head fluctuation in a coastal aquifer system that extends under the sea

Journal of Hydrology Volumes 450-451, 11 July 2012, Pages 150-158
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0022169412003915>

State drilling debate painfully lacking

Herald-Sun, The (Durham, NC) - Tuesday, June 19, 2012
Author: Chris Fitzsimon

It might be difficult to believe, given the damage this General Assembly has already done to North Carolina, but legislative leaders reached a new low last week.

That's true not only in the regressive legislation they passed, but how they passed it, limiting debate on the most important environmental issue of our generation, playing crass political games with taxes and teachers jobs, and using a constitutionally questionable maneuver to deny federal loans to thousands of community college students. And that is nowhere near an exhaustive list.

The most startling moment of the week came on the House floor Thursday as the House voted to legalize hydraulic fracturing , or fracking , for natural gas in North Carolina. The approval comes despite serious concerns about the impact on air quality, drinking water, and quality of life in local communities of the practice that includes horizontal drilling and injections of hundreds of chemicals into underground rock formations.

House Speaker Thom Tillis didn't seem that interested in hearing much discussion about the subject, limiting debate on amendments to the bill to just ten minutes, including one comprehensive proposal by Rep. Pricey Harrison that would slow down the process and put more consumer and environmental protections in place.

Harrison's amendment would have transformed the bill into something close to what Republican Rep. Mitch Gillespie said a few weeks ago that he supported. Gillespie has apparently changed his mind and was the primary spokesman on the House floor for the hurry-up-and-frack approach that has already passed the Senate.

There's plenty more to say about why rushing to legalize fracking is a dangerous idea but it was a nonchalant comment by Gillespie that crystallizes much of the concern.

Several members of the House asked how the public could be certain that fracking would be done safely when the Department of Environment and Natural Resources is woefully underfunded and understaffed after Republicans made deep cuts to its budget last year.

Gillespie, who once bragged about drawing a target on his office window that overlooks the building that houses the department, replied that he would make sure enough staff was employed to develop and enforce the fracking regulations and then added that talks were underway with the American Petroleum Institute to fund some of the positions.

That's not a typo or a mistake.

Gillespie told the House that legislative leaders are talking with the oil and gas industry about funding the people who would be charged with making sure that the industry was following safety and environmental regulations.

It's a statement that is almost impossible to comprehend. Rep. Rick Glazier must have felt the same way because later in the debate he asked Gillespie about it directly.

"I just want to make sure of something I thought I heard. You indicated a moment ago that API might provide and help with some of the funding and some of the positional needs that we have," Glazier said. "Am I correct in that?"

Gillespie replied, "There's conversation going on with that, yes sir."

There are many reasons why the rush to allow fracking is a terrible idea. But none is as easy to understand as the fact that Republican legislative leaders want to put the oil and gas industry in charge of regulating themselves, with the health of our families and our communities at stake.

The extremist, out-of-control tea party General Assembly rolls on.

Chris Fitzsimon is executive director of NC Policy Watch.

NEW RULES EXPAND HYDRAULIC FRACTURING REPORTS

US Fed News (USA) - Tuesday, June 19, 2012

INDIANAPOLIS, June 18 -- The Indiana Department of Natural Resources issued the following news release:

New temporary rules governing hydraulic fracturing operations conducted by oil and gas operators in Indiana will become effective July 1, 2012.

These temporary rules result from the passage of House Bill 1107 (2012), otherwise known as P.L. 16-2012, which requires the Department of Natural Resources to develop rules for the reporting and disclosure of hydraulic fracturing treatments used in oil and gas wells.

Unlike horizontal shale gas wells in other regions of the United States, Indiana's horizontal shale gas wells in the New Albany Shale formation are rarely completed with hydraulic fracturing treatments.

In other regions of the country, more than 8 million gallons of water can be used for hydraulic fracturing treatments on each well.

The new rule expands requirements for reporting hydraulic fracturing information to all wells in Indiana. Previously, requirements for submittal and approval of hydraulic fracturing plans and detailed reporting of hydraulic fracturing treatments, including the specific products used, applied only to coal bed methane wells.

The new rules require all well operators who use hydraulic fracturing to enhance the productivity of an oil or gas well to provide detailed information on the types and volumes of fluids and additives used in the well treatment. The information will be reported to the DNR Division of Oil & Gas, made a part of the permanent well record and posted on the Division's website where the public may view the information.

New information to be submitted includes the volume and source of the base fluid used (usually water); the type and amounts of proppant used (usually sand); and the type and volume of all additive products used in the hydraulic fracturing treatment. A copy of the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for each additive product used will be posted on the Division's website.

See IN.gov/nrc/files/lisa_12292e.pdf for a downloadable copy of the new temporary rule.

Typically there are between 250 and 300 new wells completed in Indiana each year.

According to the Division of Oil & Gas, on average only 20 to 25 percent of new wells are completed with the use of hydraulic fracturing treatments. Where hydraulic fracturing is used, the total volume of fluids averages about 8,000 gallons for oil wells and about 32,000 gallons of fluid in some gas wells and coal bed methane wells.

To learn more about oil and gas operations in Indiana and the new requirements for reporting hydraulic fracturing information, visit the Division of Oil & Gas website at dnr.IN.gov/dnroil or contact the Indianapolis office at (317) 232-4055.

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com
Memo: Herschel McDivitt, 317/232-4058.

Herman wants to monitor fracking in county

Wyoming Tribune-Eagle (Cheyenne, WY) - Tuesday, June 19, 2012

Author: Josh Mitchell

bkm

Herman wants to monitor fracking in county

Herman bio

Age: 61

Hometown: Born in Albuquerque, N.M; moved around with military family

Address: 515 E. 18th St.

Education: Graduate of Clovis (N.M.) High School; bachelor's degree in English, Colorado College; master's degree in teaching, University of Chicago; master's degree in mass communication, University of South Carolina.

Profession: Lobbyist for League of Women Voters; freelance journalist

Party affiliation: Democrat

CHEYENNE - Democratic Laramie County Commission candidate Marguerite Herman says she does not support tax breaks to draw companies to the county.

A better approach to bring business is developing parcels of land with infrastructure such as water, sewer and roads, she said. That way when a business wants to come here, there are spots ready for them.

The jobs that the Niobrara oil play can bring to the county are good, but that does not come without consequences such as road damage and risk to the county's water supply, said Herman, who is seeking a two-year seat.

The oil play process, known as hydraulic fracturing , involves injecting water, sand and chemicals into the earth to release oil and natural gas.

"The evidence suggests that it is a factor in the degradation of water quality," she said. "It uses vast amounts of water. Evidence is that it could be a factor in pollution."

As a county commissioner, she said she would advocate on behalf of Laramie County residents to make sure fracking was regulated in a fashion that did not endanger water supplies. That could involve limiting permits or demonstrating that the water supply is not being drawn too far down.

Moreover, she said oil companies should pay to fix roads they damage with heavy trucks.

Her goal is to develop a plan for Laramie County's future in which there is responsible, sustainable growth. She said she would have to look into the amount of zoning there currently is in the county and see if more is needed.

A joint city-county planning board should be created to help develop an overall vision for Laramie County, she said.

"Our fates are all tied together," she said. "What helps one, helps all."

If elected, she said she would support the public having access to the county's business.

"I'm all for government transparency," she said.

The proposed \$21.8 million Laramie County Fairgrounds and Events Center on the Aug. 21 sixth-penny sales tax ballot gets her support.

It would be an economic development tool as it would draw people to the county to spend money on restaurants and hotels, she said.

"It has great potential to increase the sales receipts for the whole county," she said.

Moreover, she said she thinks it could be profitable based on the business plan she has seen for the facility.

Asked why the county would build its own events center when the city's loses money every year, she said, "I think this is a completely different thing."

The city's facility is not suitable for meetings and conventions, she said.

Likewise, she does not see why the city and the county should partner on the existing municipal events center if the county's events center fails on the sixth-penny ballot.

"I don't see what that would gain," she said.

Sometimes lawsuits between the city and the county may be needed to bring in a third party to resolve disputes, she said.

She said she would need to look further into how the county handles its finances. But the \$2.4 million in

change orders for phase one of the Laramie County Archer Complex sounds high, she noted.

"Change orders can happen for a lot of reasons," she said.

However, the \$46,000 cost to remodel the Laramie County commissioners' board room and office area does not bother her. While that is a significant amount of money, it is also important to have a nice area to conduct the public's business, she said.

And she is OK with leaving the county commissioners' pay at the current rate of \$40,516 a year. There has been some talk of lowering the pay, since there will soon be five commissioners instead of the current three to handle the workload.

Md. firm, railway to store drilling sand in Texas

Associated Press State Wire: Illinois (IL) - Monday, June 18, 2012

FREDERICK, Md. (AP) – U.S. Silica Holdings Inc. says it's partnering with the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad to bring large amounts of sand to South Texas for use in hydraulic fracturing of the Eagle Ford shale.

Frederick-based U.S. Silica said Monday that the railway will haul up to 40,000 tons of silica sand and other products per month to San Antonio from facilities in Ottawa, Ill., and Rochelle, Ill. The 100-car trains will run three to four times a month.

The San Antonio site will store 15,000 tons of silica sand, starting in early 2013.

Hydraulic fracturing uses large amounts of sand mixed with water and chemicals to break up underground rock formations and release gas and oil.

The BNSF Railway Co. is owned by Berkshire Hathaway Inc. of Omaha, Neb.

Edna Loehman: Sanfacon stronger on fracking

Daily Times-Call, The (Longmont, CO) - Monday, June 18, 2012

On the issue of fracking, Garry Sanfacon and Elise Jones are in sharp contrast. Elise fears that defying state statutes on natural gas drilling will invite litigation from the industry, whereas Garry believes that local governments should not give up their rights to self-determination.

Elise has stated that "liquefied natural gas" could significantly curb U.S. dependence on foreign oil, reduce harmful emissions and create more jobs domestically as natural gas production increases" (p. 32, Natural Gas 360, Advancing America's Energy Solution, Colorado Gas and Oil Association, 2011). Studies in New York and Pennsylvania have shown that any increase in local jobs has not been significant (Helene Jorgensen, Center for Economic Policy Research, Jan. 8, 2012, cepr.net).

With his strong stand against fracking, Garry supports increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy. He believes "the county must be a leader in implementing and developing programs and incentives to maximize the application of energy efficiency measures and renewable energy." (<http://garrysanfacon.org>)

Garry has been working in the county for 20 years "to protect the environment, support human services and enhance our quality of life." (<http://garrysanfacon.org>) Most recently, he was appointed to be the Fourmile Fire Recovery manager and was greatly commended for his leadership and facilitation of a community approach. As commissioner, he will continue to listen to all parties and act wisely for local concerns. His endorsements include local officials, community leaders and business owners.

Elise Jones' experience at the state level as Colorado Environmental Coalition executive director for 10 years and her endorsements are impressive. But her experience has been mainly at the state level.
EDNA LOEHMAN Longmont

EPA results on fracking in Wyoming continue to confound

Denver Post, The: Blogs (CO) - Monday, June 18, 2012
Author: Mark Jaffe

“The truth is rarely pure and never simple” – Oscar Wilde

When it comes to the debate over the use of hydraulic fracking - a process in which water, sand and chemicals are pumped into a well under pressure to crack rock and release oil and natural gas – I’m with Oscar.

The details can be so complex that fracking’s opponents and supporters both lose patience and simply retire to their corners, wait for the bell to ring and begin slugging it out. But what gets lost when the details get lost is the truth.

Consider this paragraph from the New York Times story last week about Gov. Cuomo’s plan to limit natural gas development to a single tier of economically depressed counties on the Pennsylvania border:

“But concerns have persisted about the chemicals used in the process. Last year, for instance, federal regulators linked fracking to a contaminated water supply in part of central Wyoming.”

That, however, isn’t precisely what the Environmental Protection Agency found. What did they find in Pavillion, Wyoming?

The report was issued in December and while it may be a little fastidious to go over this material again, this is reminiscent of the story about the terrible soprano who once sang at La Scala.

After finishing an aria, the crowd erupted shouting, “encore, encore.” So she sang it again. Again the crowd shouted for another encore. The orchestra maestro turned around and yelled at the audience, “Idiots, what’s wrong with you, she’s terrible.”

“She’s got to sing it till she gets it right,” someone in the audience yelled back.

And so in that spirit:

The EPA study was prompted by complaints from residents in Pavillion that there problems with their well water.

The agency did find high concentrations of benzene, xylenes, gasoline and diesel in ground water samples and monitoring wells - the likely source, however, wasn’t fracking but old, leaking surface waste pits. Methane and dissolved hydrocarbons were also found in several domestic wells.

Most of these wells were about 100 feet deep, but pollutants in deeper domestic wells led EPA to drill two test wells to about 980 feet - roughly twice the depth of the deepest drinking water wells.

It was in these test wells that EPA detected synthetic organic compounds associated with fracking - such as isopropanol and diethylene glycol. Isopropanol is used in a biocide and diethylene glycol is used in a foaming agent and in a solvent.

The organic chemicals were more numerous and at higher concentrations in the deeper of the two monitoring wells.

The Pavilion gas wells were drilled to a depth of about 1,200 feet, and surface casing – pipe to protect groundwater – went to about 360 feet, according to the EPA report.

So the question is how did those chemicals make it through 200 feet of rock to the test wells?

There was a suggestion of upward and lateral migration from the fracked wells, the EPA said, and while the exact hydraulic links weren’t known there were flowing conditions.

“Alternative explanations were carefully considered to explain individual sets of data,” EPA said. “However, when considered together with other lines of evidence, the data indicates likely impact to ground water that can be explained by hydraulic fracturing .”

Encana Corp., which owns 123 gas wells in Pavillion has disputed the EPA findings, arguing that the fluids used in drilling the test wells may have contaminated them.

After Encana bought the existing well field in 2005, the company discovered the old pits were leaking, reported it to Wyoming oil and gas regulators and started a clean-up.

The EPA found lots of problems in the Pavillon field - poorly constructed wells, casing that did not go down far enough to protect aquifers and the leaking pits -underscoring that there are lots of ways oil and gas development can pollute.

But the findings on fracking while suggestive and important are limited. Water supplies were not contaminated by frack fluids and fracking did not turn out to be the cause per se of the problems that prompted it the residents of Pavillion to seek the EPA’s help.

Caption: Oscar Wilde weighs in on fracking

Beltway Blog – Hick: Hydraulic fracturing has gotten a bad rap

Denver Post, The: Blogs (CO) - Monday, June 18, 2012

Author: Allison Sherry

WASHINGTON – Hydraulic fracturing for natural gas has gotten a needlessly bad reputation and gas will create jobs in Colorado and the nation if it is embraced, Gov. John Hickenlooper said at a renewable energy summit here Monday.

Hickenlooper said there was a lot of “conflict and misinformation” about natural gas, which he says could provide a lucrative energy future for Colorado. He said recent stories in The New York Times about hydraulic fracturing were distorted and off-based.

“I was personally involved with 50 or 60 (fracked) wells,” he said, at the Atlantic Next Generation Energy summit in Washington. “There have been tens and thousands of wells in Colorado ... and we can’t find anywhere in Colorado a single example of the process of fracing that has polluted groundwater.”

He noted there were some wells that did not have proper cement casing and there was degradation beneath the ground, but that was not the fault of the process of hydraulic fracturing .

“There is a lot of anxiety out there certainly with hydraulic fracturing ,” he said. “But often times that anxiety is not directly connected to facts.”

Hickenlooper noted that Colorado is a true “poster child” for an all-of-the-above energy policy.

Colorado is among the top two states for solar energy, the top three states for natural gas and the top four states in coal and clean coal technology.

Caption: Gov. John Hickenlooper said Monday in a speech in Washington that hydraulic fracturing or fracing has gotten a bad reputation nationally.

Public Meeting on Draft Permitting Guidance for Oil and Gas Hydraulic Fracturing Activities Using Diesel Fuels - ACTION: Notice.

Federal Register (USA) - Monday, June 18, 2012

SUMMARY: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA or agency) is announcing a public meeting to discuss draft permitting guidance the agency has developed on the use of diesel fuels in oil and gas hydraulic fracturing and to solicit input during the public comment period. The meeting is open to all interested parties. The agency requests input on the following technical aspects of the draft permitting guidance: Diesel fuels description; diesel fuels usage information; permit duration and well closure; area

of review; information submitted with the permit application; and monitoring.

DATES: The meeting will take place on Monday, June 29, 2012, in Room 1153 EPA East, 1201 Constitution Ave. NW., Washington, DC. Participants may choose from two sessions, from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. or from 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Seating is limited. Registration will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. To allow for maximum public participation, registrants are asked to select one session only. Pre-registration will open on Wednesday, June 20, 2012, and close on Thursday, June 28, 2012, at noon. Registration may also be available at the door as space permits. See SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION section for registration details.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sherri Comerford, Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water, Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW., Mailcode 4606M, Washington, DC 20460; telephone number: 202-564-4639; email address: comerford.sherri@epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: EPA is hosting a public informational meeting to discuss "Permitting Guidance for Oil and Gas Hydraulic Fracturing Activities Using Diesel Fuels--Draft: Underground Injection Control Program Guidance #84." The draft guidance, available at this Web site, <http://water.epa.gov/type/groundwater/uic/class2/hydraulicfracturing/hydraulic-fracturing.cfm>, is intended to provide information for EPA permit writers issuing permits under the Safe Drinking Water Act to ensure protection of underground sources of drinking water. The draft guidance is open for public comment from May 10, 2012, to July 9, 2012, to allow stakeholders to provide input and feedback before it is finalized. The meeting is open to the public, and all interested stakeholders are invited to attend.

Registration details: Registration is scheduled to open on Wednesday, June 20, 2012, and close on Thursday, June 28, 2012, at noon. Participants are requested to pre-register for either the 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. session or the 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. session, using an online form that will be accessible from the following Web site: http://water.epa.gov/type/groundwater/uic/class2/hydraulicfracturing/wells_hydroout.cfm. Registration may also be available at the door as space permits. Please check the Web site for availability.

Meeting information: Both morning and afternoon sessions will begin with a brief presentation by the EPA Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water on the basics of the guidance. Copies of EPA's presentation will be available at the meeting and posted on the Web at http://water.epa.gov/type/groundwater/uic/class2/hydraulicfracturing/wells_hydroout.cfm the day of the meeting. An oral comment session will follow the presentation. Oral comments will be limited to two (2) minutes each, and it is preferred that only one person present the statement on behalf of a group or organization to accommodate as many participants as possible. Registered attendees requesting to make an oral presentation will be placed on the commenting schedule. Time slots are limited and will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. EPA may ask clarifying questions during the oral presentations, but will not respond to the presentations.

You may present oral comments during the meeting; and/or submit written comments and supporting information directly to EPA. Instructions for submitting comments, the draft guidance, and a Federal Register notice providing detail on topics on which the agency invites comment, are available on the Web site, <http://water.epa.gov/type/groundwater/uic/class2/hydraulicfracturing/hydraulic-fracturing.cfm>. Written statements and supporting information submitted during the comment period will be considered in the same manner as any oral comments and supporting information presented at the public meeting. The agency requests input on the following technical aspects of the draft permitting guidance: diesel fuels description; diesel fuels usage information; permit duration and well closure; area of review; information submitted with the permit application; and monitoring.

All attendees must go through a metal detector, sign in with the security desk, and show government-issued photo identification to enter the building.

Special Accommodations: For information on access or services for individuals with disabilities and to request accommodation of a disability, please contact Sherri Comerford at (202) 564-4639 or Comerford.Sherri@epa.gov, preferably at least 5 days prior to the meeting, to give EPA as much time as

possible to process your request.

Dated: June 11, 2012.

Pamela S. Barr,

Acting Director, Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water.

[FR Doc. 2012-14786 Filed 6-15-12; 8:45 am]

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[FRL-9688-6]

Notices

Hinchey Urges New York to Take Stronger Steps on Fracking - Rep. Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) News Release

Government Press Releases (USA) - Monday, June 18, 2012

Washington, DC -- Following up on a report in The New York Times that New York Governor Andrew Cuomo's administration is pursuing a plan that would permit hydraulic fracturing in parts of New York, Congressman Maurice Hinchey today urged the governor to take a series of 10 steps before even considering the possibility of any natural gas drilling in the state. The congressman praised the governor for his thoughtfulness on the issue, but said that more steps need to be taken to adequately protect the environment and public health from the risks of the controversial gas extraction process that involves pumping toxic chemicals deep into the ground.

"I commend you for the deliberate and thoughtful way in which you have proceeded with shale gas drilling in New York," Hinchey wrote in a letter sent today to Cuomo. "It is clear that you want to make sure people's water supplies are protected and I applaud the fact that you and your administration have not stood in the way of local communities that have passed hydraulic fracturing bans. However, despite the very hard work of, and sincere efforts by, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to update New York's rules covering high-volume hydraulic fracturing, serious gaps remain."

Among Hinchey's recommendations to the governor are: a cumulative impact analysis of the impact hydraulic fracturing would have in the state; a full assessment of public health risks; a comprehensive wastewater treatment plan; a rule to create further distance between potential drilling sites and water supplies; a prohibition on the use of toxic chemicals in all fracking fluids; a rule mandating public disclosure of all chemicals used at each well site before drilling commences; a dramatic increase in New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) resources and staffing to oversee potential drilling; a complete ban on land spreading of fracking waste fluids; alignment of DEC's gas drilling permit rules with the requirements of secondary lending institutions covering oil and gas activity on mortgaged properties; and waiting for the result of the ongoing EPA study of hydraulic fracturing that the congressman initiated.

Earlier this year, Hinchey urged Cuomo to withdraw the state's revised draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (dSGEIS) on high-volume horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing in the Marcellus Shale and other areas of New York State. Hinchey said at the time that the current form of the dSGEIS failed to address many of his concerns with the initial draft and also does not account for new information that has been discovered about the environmental, public health and economic risks associated with the natural gas drilling activity.

"We only have one chance to get this right, which is why we must take every possible step to protect the environment, public water supplies, and the overall health of residents from the dangers of hydraulic fracturing," Hinchey said. "Governor Cuomo has taken some positive steps forward to protect

communities from fracking , but much more needs to be done before any consideration should be given to issuing permits for drilling."

Hinchey is a leader in Congress of the effort to protect drinking water and the environment from the risks of hydraulic fracturing . He is a co-author of the Fracturing Responsibility and Awareness of Chemicals (FRAC) Act, which would mandate public disclosure of chemicals used in fracking fluid and close a loophole from the 2005 Bush-Cheney energy bill in order to allow the EPA to regulate fracking activities under the Safe Drinking Water Act. The congressman, who is a member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior and the Environment, also authored the appropriations language that led to the current EPA study on the risks that hydraulic fracturing poses to drinking water supplies.

The full text of Hinchey's letter to Cuomo follows:

June 14, 2012

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo

Governor of New York State

NYS State Capitol Building

Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

As you know, over the last few years I have been actively working to protect the environment, public health and our communities from the risks posed by horizontal drilling and high-volume hydraulic fracturing . Shale gas drilling has been proliferating rapidly across the country and, unfortunately, too many states have not taken the necessary steps to protect our communities, water resources, air quality, and public health. New York must not follow this path. In response to today's piece in The New York Times entitled "New York Plan Would Restrict Drilling to Struggling Region," I wanted to share my thoughts with you on this matter.

I commend you for the deliberate and thoughtful way in which you have proceeded with shale gas drilling in New York. It is clear that you want to make sure people's water supplies are protected and I applaud the fact that you and your administration have not stood in the way of local communities that have passed hydraulic fracturing bans.

However, despite the very hard work of, and sincere efforts by, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to update New York's rules covering high-volume hydraulic fracturing , serious gaps remain. As you consider how to move New York forward on this issue, I hope you will take in to account the following recommendations:

A cumulative impact analysis of natural gas drilling in the Marcellus formation to understand the full impact drilling could have on our water resources, air quality, local roads and other public infrastructure.

A full assessment of the public health impacts of gas drilling through an independent Health Impact Analysis, as called for by more than 250 health care professionals in an October 2011 letter.

A comprehensive wastewater treatment plan that details where and how large amounts of flowback and produced water will be treated or disposed, including how toxic or radioactive contaminants will be removed.

The state's proposed setbacks are too close to sensitive water supplies, including private drinking water wells, municipal underground water supplies, and New York City's underground drinking water aqueducts. The state should consider analyses and recommendations from the U.S. Geological Survey and the New York City Department of Environment Protection and further study is needed to determine appropriate

setback distances.

A prohibition on the use of toxic chemicals in all fracturing fluids in order to prevent groundwater and surface water contamination. The revised draft calls for operators to "consider" less toxic fracking additives. The state should mandate the use of non-toxic fracking additives and ban the use of carcinogenic and endocrine-disrupting compounds.

Public disclosure of all chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing fluid at each well site, before drilling operations begin. Specifically, the state should require gas companies to publicly disclose all proposed chemical constituents and their percentage by mass before operations commence and disclose the actual chemical constituents and percentage by mass after the operations are completed.

A dramatic increase in DEC resources and staffing devoted to the permitting and oversight activities related to high-volume hydraulic fracturing .

A complete ban on land spreading of shale gas drilling waste fluids and a prohibition on the use of reserve pits or centralized impoundments for fracking fluids and flowback water.

Alignment of DEC's gas drilling permit rules with the requirements of secondary lending institutions covering oil and gas activity on mortgaged properties. These include pre-approval from banks and other lenders before signing gas leases, minimum setback requirements from residential structures, prohibition on certain drilling and process equipment, title insurance requirements, property assessments, and more.

Await the results of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's comprehensive study on hydraulic fracturing and water resources, which I initiated in 2009, before making a final decision on this issue.

You are, and have been, an outstanding governor and I am deeply proud of the way you have led our state over the last year and a half. I know you want what's best for New York and I appreciate your consideration of my views as you contemplate the future of shale gas drilling in our great state.

Best regards.

Sincerely,

Read this original document at:

http://hinchey.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1854&Itemid=142

Xtreme Oil & Gas Successfully Completes Hydraulic Fracturing at Oil - Field Properties in Kansas

Market Wire (USA) - Monday, June 18, 2012

Xtreme Oil & Gas, Inc. (OTCQB: XTOG) (OTCBB: XTOG), an independent energy company engaged in the exploration, development, and production of crude oil, announced today the completion of initial Hydraulic Fracturing operations at the 8,500 acre property in Kansas.

This property previously generated over 21 million barrels of oil for Exxon Mobil Corporation and others in its 70 year history. Xtreme Oil & Gas and its partners have employed a low risk horizontal drilling program combined with a multi-stage hydraulic fracturing technique in an effort to produce the remaining recoverable oil in these locations.

Willard McAndrew, CEO of Xtreme Oil & Gas, stated, "Kansas represents a significant opportunity for the Company and its partners as we look to shift into production and capitalize on the geologist estimated 3.7 million barrels of recoverable oil. Our proven track record of success in utilizing new technologies to recover oil at previously producing sites bodes well for the efficacy of our operations, and we anticipate revenue from Kansas in the third quarter of 2012."

About Xtreme Oil & Gas

Xtreme Oil & Gas, Inc. is a rapidly growing Dallas-based independent energy company engaged in the exploration, development, acquisition, and production of crude oil and natural gas with operations from

properties it owns in Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas. The company's oilfield services disposes of saltwater for independent energy producers.

Forward-Looking Statements

Statements included in this release related to Xtreme Oil & Gas, Inc. constitute or may constitute forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Such statements involve a number of risks and uncertainties such as the inherent uncertainty of finding and developing oil and gas properties, the technological and financial difficulties inherent in these activities, the price of hydrocarbons and the Company's ability to estimate accurately net revenues due to variability in size, scope and duration of projects. Further information on potential risk factors that could affect the Company's financial results can be found in the Company's reports filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Trapping carbon may cause quakes - Report: Risk greater than with fracking

Olympian, The (WA) - Monday, June 18, 2012

Author: JIM EFSTATHIOU JR., Bloomberg News

NEW YORK - Burying carbon dioxide in the ground, considered a promising way to combat climate change, may increase the risk of earthquakes, according to a report.

The process, in which liquefied carbon dioxide is stored in caverns, "may have the potential for causing significant induced seismicity," the National Research Council said Friday. Injecting wastewater underground from natural-gas fracking may also trigger earthquakes, while using hydraulic fracturing to get trapped gas doesn't pose a "high risk," the report found.

Burying carbon may pose a higher risk of quakes than wastewater disposal because it involves continuous injection of liquefied gas at high pressure, according to the report.

"Projects that inject or extract large net volumes of fluids over long periods of time such as CCS may have potential for larger induced seismic events," according to the report. "Insufficient information exists to understand this potential."

The International Energy Agency said in a Monday report that carbon capture is "the only technology on the horizon today that would allow industrial sectors (such as iron and steel, cement and natural gas processing) to meet deep emissions reduction goals."

While no large-scale carbon-capture projects are on line, abandoning the technology would "significantly" increase the cost of reaching greenhouse-gas emissions targets, the IEA said.

The National Research Council, a nonprofit based in Washington, provides scientific information for government decision-makers under the auspices of the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering and the Institute of Medicine.

Sen. Jeff Bingaman, a New Mexico Democrat and chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, requested the study to assess the potential for seismic events related to energy production.

In the United States, fracking by forcing millions of gallons of chemically treated water and sand underground to free trapped gas has been used on 35,000 wells, according to the report.

The only confirmed link between fracking and seismic activity was a 2.3-magnitude quake near Blackpool, England, in 2011, the report found.

Evidence linking underground storage of fluids from energy production and earthquakes led regulators to add requirements for water-disposal wells. Researchers think an increase in wastewater wells may be the cause for a sixfold jump in total quakes in the central U.S. from 2000 to 2011.

Latitude Solutions Inc. Announces Signed Agreement To Deploy Proprietary Wastewater Treatment

System at Harley Dome Waste water facility in Utah

PR Newswire (USA) - Monday, June 18, 2012

Author: Latitude Solutions, Inc.

BOCA RATON, Fla., June 18, 2012 /PRNewswire/ --

Latitude Solutions, Inc. (OTC: LATI.QB) announced today that its has signed a contract with Harley Dome LLC to deploy the Company's proprietary Electro-Precipitation™ EP™ water remediation technology at the Harley Dome Waste Water Facility in Westwater, Utah.

Harley Dome is a full service waste water processing facility. The agreement consists of a fee per barrel processed for the provisioning of the equipment.

(Logo: <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20120208/FL49584LOGO>)

Mr. Jerry Langdon, Latitude Solutions, Inc.'s CEO, stated, "We are pleased to provide our proprietary technology to support the operations for Harley Dome. Latitude's EP™ technology provides a turn-key sustainable solution which enables oil and gas service companies to reuse and recycle large amounts of previously unusable water while reducing costs. This contract expands the footprint of our innovative Electro-Precipitation™ technology within the oil and gas industry into the Piceance and Uinta Basins in Colorado and Utah." Mr. Langdon further stated that, "Oil and gas is among the several industry applications for our technology. Latitude Solution's is continuing to pursue other revenue streams for our proprietary waste water treatment solutions which include public/private utilities, food processing, paper/pulp processing, and mining companies. We are redoubling our marketing efforts in all sectors to deploy our inventory of equipment to grow revenues going forward."

Mr. Mitch Burroughs, managing member of Harley Dome LLC, said "We are very excited about bringing the Latitude system to our facility. We expect that the installation of the Latitude System will allow us to treat a much higher volume of water.

This will allow us to service a much bigger segment of the waste water market in Colorado and Utah than we have previously been able to service. Our success with the Latitude system will allow us to transfer the technology to our other facilities in Colorado and Texas where we can partner with Latitude Solutions to handle our customer's waste water treatment needs."

About Latitude Solutions, Inc. Latitude Solutions, Inc. provides innovative wastewater remediation solutions worldwide to oil & gas, energy, mining, food processing, agricultural and other industrial users worldwide utilizing its patented Electro Precipitation™, (EP™) technology. LSI's proprietary Electro Precipitation™, Integrated Water Systems™ (IWS™) technology provides a sustainable solution to water related oil and gas production issues by rendering previously unusable production, flowback and other contaminated water suitable as reusable makeup water for ongoing operations, including hydraulic fracturing . This re-use process significantly reduces costs associated with water transportation costs, potential spill liabilities and disposal of contaminated water as well as reduces the dependence on highly sought-after new sources of fresh water for continuing operations. The Company provides its technology worldwide via a recurring revenue business model composed of a monthly equipment lease payment and a volumetric processing fee. The Company maintains ownership and operational control of all its processing equipment in order to ensure the best possible level of client satisfaction and quality control. LSI has offices and/or operations in Boca Raton, Florida; Colorado Springs, Colorado; Fort Worth, Texas; New York, New York; Searcy, Arkansas and London, U.K. Information on the Company and its products can be viewed on www.latitudesolutions.net.

This press release may contain certain forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended. Investors are cautioned that such forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties, including without limitation, acceptance of the Company's products, increased levels of competition for the Company, new products and technological changes, the Company's dependence on third-party suppliers, and other risks detailed from time to time in the Company's periodic reports filed with the Securities and Exchange.

Contact: Virginia Dadey, Director of Financial Relations 2595 NW Boca Raton Blvd., Suite 100 Boca Raton, FL 33431 (561) 353-7511 vdadey@latitudesolutions.net
SOURCE Latitude Solutions, Inc.

New Rules Expand Hydraulic Fracturing Reports

Targeted News Service (USA) - Monday, June 18, 2012

INDIANAPOLIS, June 18 -- The Indiana Department of Natural Resources issued the following news release:

New temporary rules governing hydraulic fracturing operations conducted by oil and gas operators in Indiana will become effective July 1, 2012.

These temporary rules result from the passage of House Bill 1107 (2012), otherwise known as P.L. 16-2012, which requires the Department of Natural Resources to develop rules for the reporting and disclosure of hydraulic fracturing treatments used in oil and gas wells.

Unlike horizontal shale gas wells in other regions of the United States, Indiana's horizontal shale gas wells in the New Albany Shale formation are rarely completed with hydraulic fracturing treatments.

In other regions of the country, more than 8 million gallons of water can be used for hydraulic fracturing treatments on each well.

The new rule expands requirements for reporting hydraulic fracturing information to all wells in Indiana. Previously, requirements for submittal and approval of hydraulic fracturing plans and detailed reporting of hydraulic fracturing treatments, including the specific products used, applied only to coal bed methane wells.

The new rules require all well operators who use hydraulic fracturing to enhance the productivity of an oil or gas well to provide detailed information on the types and volumes of fluids and additives used in the well treatment. The information will be reported to the DNR Division of Oil & Gas, made a part of the permanent well record and posted on the Division's website where the public may view the information.

New information to be submitted includes the volume and source of the base fluid used (usually water); the type and amounts of proppant used (usually sand); and the type and volume of all additive products used in the hydraulic fracturing treatment. A copy of the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for each additive product used will be posted on the Division's website.

See IN.gov/nrc/files/lisa_12292e.pdf for a downloadable copy of the new temporary rule.

Typically there are between 250 and 300 new wells completed in Indiana each year.

According to the Division of Oil & Gas, on average only 20 to 25 percent of new wells are completed with the use of hydraulic fracturing treatments. Where hydraulic fracturing is used, the total volume of fluids averages about 8,000 gallons for oil wells and about 32,000 gallons of fluid in some gas wells and coal bed methane wells.

To learn more about oil and gas operations in Indiana and the new requirements for reporting hydraulic fracturing information, visit the Division of Oil & Gas website at dnr.IN.gov/dnroil or contact the Indianapolis office at (317) 232-4055.

TNS MkTanz120619-JF78-3914826 StaffFurigay
Memo: Herschel McDivitt, 317/232-4058, dnrnews@dnr.in.gov

The Washington Daybook - Federal Agencies - Futures - 1 p.m. Safe Drinking Water Issues - Meeting Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (F.R. Page 34382)

Washington Day Book (DC) - Monday, June 18, 2012

TOPIC/SUBJECT: holds a meeting by teleconference/webinar of the National Drinking Water Advisory

Council to discuss a draft guidance for EPA permit writers relative to hydraulic fracturing using diesel fuels under the Safe Drinking Water Act's Underground Injection Control (UIC) Program and also options for assisting small water systems in achieving sustainable practices.

DATE: June 27, 2012

LOCATION: None given

Roy Simon 202-564-3868 Simon.Roy@epa.gov

[Note: RSVP for<ContactName>conference call and webinar information.]

The Washington Daybook - Federal Agencies - Futures - 8:30 a.m. Oil/Gas Hydraulic Fracturing Activities Using Diesel Fuels - SUBHED: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (F.R. Page 36273) meeting to discuss draft permitting guidance the agency has developed on the use of diesel fuels in oil and gas hydraulic fracturing .

Washington Day Book (DC) - Monday, June 18, 2012

AGENDA: Highlights:

-- 8:30 a.m.: Morning session

-- 1:30 p.m.: Afternoon session

DATE: June 29, 2012

LOCATION: EPA East, 1201 Constitution Avenue NW, Room 1153, Washington, D.C.

Sherri Comerford 202-564-4639 comerford.sherri@epa.gov

[Note: Pre-registration opens on Wednesday June 20 and closes on Thursday June 28 at noon. Log-on to http://water.epa.gov/type/groundwater/uic/class2/hydraulicfracturing/wells_hydroout.cfm to register for<ContactName>either the morning<ContactName>afternoon session.]

How wide will fracking door open ?

Buffalo News, The (NY) - Sunday, June 17, 2012

Author: David Robinson - NEWS BUSINESS REPORTER

Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo floated a trial balloon last week when aides privately outlined a plan to allow hydraulic fracturing on a limited basis in five Southern Tier counties ? and only in communities that support the controversial natural gas drilling technique.

If it doesn't get shot down ? and the reaction from critics was predictably unhappy ? it could be the opening that the drilling industry has long awaited in its push to tap into the vast quantities of natural gas trapped in layers of shale a mile or so beneath the surface.

Tom Wilber, a newspaper reporter-turned author who has chronicled the development of the drilling boom in Pennsylvania and its stagnation in New York, says the plan is vintage Cuomo ? a way to start drilling on a smaller scale while also respecting the wishes of individual communities, more than 100 of which have said they want nothing to do with fracking . Several dozen others have passed resolutions supporting drilling. "These are the communities that really need it because they're impoverished," Wilber said.

"The governor is hearing them, evidently," said Wilber, who has followed the gas drilling controversy for years, first as a reporter for Gannett Corp.'s upstate newspapers, including the Binghamton Press & Sun-Bulletin, and most recently as the author of an interesting and balanced new book chronicling the shale gas issue, "Under the Surface."

"He's saying, 'We're going to split this up,' " Wilber said last week, during a stop in Western New York to speak at a historical society convention and give a talk at the Talking Leaves bookstore in Buffalo. "It's a way to get permitting going."

If Cuomo's proposal advances ? and Wilber isn't convinced that it will ? it would shatter the 4-year-old moratorium on the type of horizontal wells that are needed to tap into the gas-rich Marcellus and Utica shale once state regulators complete work on new regulations to govern the controversial drilling technique.

"We've made no decision with hydrofracking ," Cuomo said in an interview on an Albany radio station last

week. "DEC has to analyze the science, and they haven't finished analyzing the science."

The state Department of Environmental Conservation released its most recent draft of the proposed regulations a year ago, and the agency still is working on revisions. Drilling wouldn't start until those new rules are in place, and Cuomo's proposal, first outlined in the New York Times, would limit activity to about 50 wells.

"The regulators are really in a tough position," Wilber said. "There's a lot of money at stake. The governor obviously is pushing them to resolve this somehow. And there's no way to resolve this without making a lot of people unhappy. It's so polarized."

In New York, the Marcellus Shale stretches for more than 20,500 square miles beneath 23 southern counties. The most gas is likely to come from areas where the shale is thickest and deepest underground, primarily in areas along the Pennsylvania border, especially in Broome and Tioga counties and parts of Chenango and Chemung counties. Those four counties are where Cuomo would allow drilling, along with nearby Steuben County.

With hydraulic fracturing, drillers use millions of gallons of water, mixed with sand and a cocktail of sometimes-hazardous chemicals, that is pumped under high pressure into a well to blast open fissures in the shale and allow the gas to escape. The process, however, is highly controversial, with the gas industry claiming the technique is safe and critics pointing to dozens of serious accidents — from spills to explosions and contaminated waste water — and thousands of others that were less severe as proof that it isn't.

Wilber, retaining the reporter's veil of neutrality, isn't taking sides. "I'm on the pro-transparency side, and often times, that puts you on the activist side of the fence," he said.

Still, even with all of the drilling that's led to the drilling of more than 3,500 wells in Pennsylvania's portion of the Marcellus, Wilber believes the activity is just beginning. "It's still brand new. As you see this reach its potential, you could see 60,000 wells" from New York to West Virginia, he said. "The scope and intensity of this is beyond anything we've seen."

That raises a host of potential problems, not the least of which is how to safely treat the millions of gallons of wastewater produced at each well at a time when there aren't enough facilities to do so. "One thing I don't think people have an appreciation for is the amount of waste and how it can be handled," Wilber said.

Beyond that, how do New York officials make sure the state's stiffened regulations are followed at a time when the DEC doesn't have nearly enough staff to monitor the drilling? "It's a shell of the agency it used to be," Wilber said.

New York's approach, which would ban drilling in vast areas of the New York City and Syracuse watersheds but permit it in other places, also raises a logical question: "If it's unsafe in the New York City watershed, why is it safe in Broome County?" Wilber asked.

And if drilling does commence, how will the anti-fracking movement respond? "If there's drilling, what will they do?" Wilber asked. "Will they take to social disobedience?"
email: drobinson@buffnews.com

Butler Eagle (PA) - Sunday, June 17, 2012

Author: Paula Grubbs ; Eagle Staff Writer

Borough officials are close to a deal that would have XTO Energy buy water from the borough's reservoir to frack the company's Marcellus Shale natural gas wells.

Borough council members voted unanimously June 4 to approve a contract for Select Energy, an affiliate of XTO Energy, that would sell water from the idle reservoir on Route 528 for \$7 per 1,000 gallons.

Drillers use water to break up the shale trapping the natural gas to be extracted in Marcellus Shale drilling.

According to the contract, XTO Energy would advance the cash-strapped borough \$18,000 to modify connections at the water plant to accommodate XTO trucks and would receive \$3 off per 1,000 gallons until the debt is paid. Borough maintenance supervisor Norm Nelson said it could take as little as three weeks to pay off the debt at that rate.

Borough solicitor Mike Gallagher said Monday that XTO would not get exclusive access to the three water lines, but it could move to the head of the line if trucks from other companies also are waiting for water.

Councilman Lee Dyer said on Monday that Marcellus Shale wells are hydrofractured, or fracked, for 20 days, and 300,000 gallons of water are used per day. Dyer said there are six or seven wells waiting to be fracked in the area that he knows of.

"You do the math," Dyer said of the revenue that could be generated through the contract with XTO.

Dyer said the reservoir can easily supply the amount of water for fracking those wells and more.

Dyer said this deal could significantly boost water-tanker traffic on Route 528 and Evans City roads leading to wells. He said the trucks carry 5,000 to 10,000 gallons of water each, and the reservoir has the capacity to fill three trucks at a time.

He was clear how he thinks the borough should use the money from water sales.

"From my perspective, that revenue stream will be used entirely for infrastructure and debt reduction," Dyer said. "It will improve our streets and pay off our bills."

The water plant has been idle since the borough began buying water from Pennsylvania American Water in February. Councilman Paul Foster said in April that the water plant is attractive to drillers because it has a state permits that allow the sale of water, unlike owners of private ponds and lakes.

Natural Gas - Tough break for fracturing jobs - Falling demand hits pressure pumping

Houston Chronicle (TX) - Sunday, June 17, 2012

Author: Simone Sebastian

HC - Stories with this logo in today's Chronicle can be found only in the Chronicle's print edition, e-edition and new iPad app.

Hydraulic fracturing companies are reeling as prices for their services slide, leading to crew layoffs and idle equipment in once booming shale gas fields.

Price tags on fracturing jobs have dropped as much as 20 percent from their peaks, pinching profits for businesses that ramped up their fleets during the boom, companies say.

The technology for getting natural gas out of dense shale rock has been instrumental in reviving fossil fuel production in the United States, even as it has raised environmental concerns in some quarters. Pressure pumping, the key component of the hydraulic fracturing process, flushes high-pressure mixtures of water, sand and chemicals thousands of feet underground to fracture the rock.

But the industry's success has become its greatest challenge.

As shale gas production exploded in recent years, a flurry of small fracturing companies launched and the biggest players in the business rapidly expanded their crews.

"There was this wave of supply coming on, too much supply," said Dennis Smith, director of corporate development for oil field services company Nabors Industries. "It created, overnight, a big excess of

pumping capacity."

In addition to that oversupply, demand for hydraulic fracturing in shale gas fields has been waning. Natural gas prices sank during the unusually warm winter, when the fuel is usually in high demand for home heating. Now some producers are closing their natural gas wells and abandoning shale gas fields.

"That exacerbated the day of reckoning for pressure pumping," Smith said.

Nabors Industries idled four of the 10 pressure pumping crews it operated for short-term contracts. The crews were laid off and the equipment was mothballed. Smith said drops in pricing and job opportunities made it too costly to keep the crews on hand.

Other oil field services companies - most of which have headquarters or significant operations in Houston - are pulling back, too.

Patterson-UTI expects pressure pumping revenue to dive 20 per cent this quarter. At Schlumberger, money budgeted to expand the North American pressure pumping division was cut and redirected to its international business.

Baker Hughes also reeled in plans to purchase more pressure pumping equipment, after the division started dragging down the company's profit margins in North America.

"As we increased headcount and added capacity to address the growing market needs, we were not able to sufficiently utilize these resources," CEO Martin Craighead said in a written statement about the company's earnings early this year.

FTS International, which nearly doubled its hydraulic fracturing business over the previous two years, has halted all plans to build new pressure pumping equipment, said CEO Marc Rowland.

Writing on the wall

"Pretty much everything that was going right in 2011 has changed. Gas prices are at historic lows, customers are cutting back, (gas) rig counts have gone down nationally," he said. "The writing was on the wall for us."

There were 562 rigs operating in U.S. natural gas fields last week, compared with 870 a year earlier, according to the most recent data available from Baker Hughes.

Natural gas futures were down 2.8 cents at \$2.467 per million British thermal units Friday in New York trading.

That's a precipitous decline from its \$13 per million Btu value in 2008, when hydraulic fracturing for natural gas was flourishing.

Companies have tried to escape the problem by moving their businesses into oil fields, where drilling activity is on the rise. But their woes have followed them there, said Simmons & Co. oil field services analyst John Daniel.

Saturated markets

The migration of hydraulic fracturing companies into areas rich in high-demand crude oil and natural gas liquids has saturated those markets, too. The number of companies operating in the Permian Basin in West Texas has more than doubled in recent years, intensifying competition and driving down the price for hydraulic fracturing, Daniel said.

"Every time you go out there, more companies are opening up offices," he said. "Now, if you want to complete a well, you can go out and call a bunch of companies and get a quote."

Further, moving hydraulic fracturing crews across states is expensive and time consuming. Crews have to acclimate to new reservoirs. Equipment stops generating revenue while it's being moved. And some burgeoning oil fields are lacking the workers, hotels and restaurants that companies need to set up shop, said Rowland of FTS.

"The logistics have not been easy at all," he said.

Hydraulic fracturing for liquid fuels has been less lucrative for the company. In the Eagle Ford Shale, a liquids-rich play in South Texas, each round of well fracturing commands about \$130,000, he said. By comparison, a job in the predominantly natural gas Haynesville Shale on the Louisiana border got about \$300,000 per round at its peak.

"Smaller companies will have trouble staying in business," Rowland said.

Quick reactions

As companies halt new equipment orders and the oversupply moderates, companies are hoping the market will start to rebound.

"It's a little early to say how everything is going to work out," Smith said. "But the industry is reacting pretty quickly to minimize the impact."

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Drillers Seek State Water - Natural Resources Available - for a Price

Repository, The (Canton, OH) - Sunday, June 17, 2012

Author: Spencer Hunt; The Columbus Dispatch

Drilling companies' growing thirst for water to "frack" Utica shale wells soon could be quenched in Ohio's parks and forests.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources officials are weighing plans that would grant drillers access to state-held reservoirs, lakes and streams. For a price.

Agency records and emails obtained by The Dispatch show that officials have been discussing the issue since at least April. Natural Resources manages state parks and forests and regulates the drilling industry.

"Access to rivers: Can we charge and how much?" states one undated memo circulated among agency officials. "Access to scenic rivers: Can we do this?"

Drilling companies can use as much as 5 million gallons of water to frack a single shale well. The water is mixed with sand and chemicals, and is pumped underground to fracture the shale and free trapped oil and gas.

Companies can take water from Ohio streams and pay to draw water from privately owned ponds. Several have signed contracts with cities, paying them for access to drinking-water reservoirs.

The demand for water will grow. The state estimates that by the end 2015, there will be 2,250 shale wells.

The use of public water for fracking is a growing issue across eastern Ohio. Environmental groups say that the fracking could strain drinking-water supplies, boating and wildlife.

"These streams and water-courses are our playgrounds and our drinking water," said Cheryl Johncox, director of the Buckeye Forest Council. "I see this sell-off of our state resources as incredibly

short-sighted."

Those concerns led the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District to announce on June 7 that it won't sell water from six reservoirs until a "water availability" study is completed.

Nine state parks and two forests that feature reservoirs, lakes or central streams are located within a 16-county region of eastern Ohio where shale drilling is the most active. Natural Resources officials looking to lease state lands for drilling named the area "Tier 1" because of the intense interest among energy companies.

Carlo LoParo, a Natural Resources spokesman, said the agency's water plans are still being developed.

"Our goal is to develop a plan that will allow for the use of water if, based on a detailed analysis, withdrawal of that water does not cause a negative impact to navigation, recreation or wildlife," LoParo said.

Records include a draft copy of a water-leasing policy dated April 16 that quotes a state law granting the authority to sell water from state-held lands when it is 'advantageous.'

Where reservoirs are concerned, the law bars sales that would hinder recreation or wildlife.

Officials also questioned how much money the state could make. "One company paid 1 penny per gallon or

\$10 per 1,000 gallons," according to the undated memo.

Muskingum Watershed Conservancy officials have asked the U.S. Geological Survey for a study of its Atwood, Clendening and Leesville reservoirs.

Greg Koltun, a hydrologist in the Geological Survey's Columbus office, said results should be available by the end of the year.

The survey will focus on water that's discharged from each reservoir's dam. Koltun said the analysis will subtract what's needed to maintain drinking-water supplies and downstream wildlife to calculate the amount of "excess" water.

Lea Harper, a member of the Southeast Ohio Alliance to Save Our Water, questioned conservancy districts would want to water.

As many as a dozen oil and gas companies have asked to draw water from six district reservoirs.

"They should be working with us to help preserve and protect that water," Harper said.

Darrin Lautenschleger, a conservancy district spokesman, said his agency includes industry among its "beneficial public uses" of water.

"Conservation involves the wise use of a natural resource, and that's something we take very seriously," he said.

SAFE? THEN PUT FRACKING TO A TEST

Times Union, The (Albany, NY) - Sunday, June 17, 2012

THE ISSUE:

Talk turns quietly to a limited shale gas drilling program.

THE STAKES:

A thorough, transparent test could answer many questions.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo is right that New York is still months away from deciding what its next step should be on natural gas drilling, so talking about that step might be premature.

But, really now. It was Mr. Cuomo's own administration that coyly raised the topic last week -- in a leak that the governor neither confirms nor denies is true. The tactic is hardly appropriate for such a vital public issue as high volume horizontal hydraulic fracturing , popularly known as fracking .

But here we are. Let's talk about the idea that the governor is apparently too politically cautious to hang his own hat on just yet.

The idea, as reported by The New York Times, would be to issue an initial 50 fracking permits in five Southern Tier counties -- Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Steuben and Tioga. They'd be issued only where the town in which the well would be drilled agrees.

The Southern Tier sits atop the Marcellus Shale, a rock formation that is said to hold vast reserves of natural gas. The state is considering whether to allow fracking , a relatively new technique that involves drilling down and then horizontally, and pumping in a mix of millions of gallons of water, sand and chemicals to fracture the rock and release trapped gas.

The industry maintains that the process is safe, but there have been incidents of drinking water contamination in several states where fracking has been allowed. While the general chemicals used in fracking are known, the industry considers the exact mixes proprietary. There has been talk of divulging the chemicals, but only after drilling is done.

New York's Department of Environmental Conservation is still reviewing tens of thousands of comments to its impact study and proposed drilling rules, and has officially made no decision.

If the DEC concludes that drilling can be done safely in New York -- and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which is also looking at fracking , concurs -- it would be reasonable to test that conclusion with a limited program, one that is entirely transparent.

There should be thorough air, water and soil tests before, during and after the test. There should be health assessments. The public should know what goes into the ground, what comes out of it, what stays below, and the full details of any mishaps. It should be able to see every permit and inspection report. Such information should not be shielded behind claims of trade secrets. This is an experiment of keen public interest.

Such a pilot program should be scaled to the ability of the DEC to monitor it and of local emergency services to respond to a spill, explosion or other disaster.

The full public costs, routine and otherwise, should tallied.

The industry should be on the hook for any damage it causes. New Yorkers well know how taxpayers, not polluters, tend to end up with the tab.

And drillers, the state and the public should all be clear that this is a test, not just some motion that New York is going through before automatically opening the gates to thousands of more wells. A thorough analysis may find that even tighter regulations and big fees or taxes are needed. It might find that fracking poses unacceptable risks.

It isn't premature to have this discussion. There's every indication that DEC will approve fracking in New York, and the federal government will bless it, too. It's worth talking now about what the next step might be, even if Mr. Cuomo won't join that discussion. You can be sure, though, that he's listening.

Residents' documentary tells 'real story' of shale gas drilling

Tribune-Democrat, The (Johnstown, PA) - Sunday, June 17, 2012

Author: Kathy Mellott, kmellott@tribdem.com

– A group of northeastern Pennsylvania natives has produced and is releasing a film geared at providing what it feels is an accurate portrayal of deep shale gas drilling in the Marcellus and Utica beds.

“Truthland,” a 34-minute documentary, was launched late last week in an effort to tell the “real story” behind the deep gas drilling that is changing the economic landscape of Pennsylvania and surrounding states.

The film is designed to counter some of the claims made in the 2010 documentary “Gaslands,” by Josh Fox, a northeastern Pennsylvania resident who raised concerns over gas drilling and the fracturing process used to open the shale beds.

“Gaslands” includes interviews with residents in the Dimock area of Susquehanna County whose water was impacted by gases some say have existed in water there since the 17th century.

“I was born and raised in northeastern Pennsylvania. We’ve had shallow methane forever,” said Chris Tucker, spokesman for Energy In Depth, a subsidiary of the Independent Petroleum Association of America.

Representing independent oil and natural gas producers since 1929, the IPAA funded production of “Truthland,” but the documentary is made up of independent interviews with those most impacted by the shale gas drilling, Tucker said.

“The mission, primarily, is to correct the record in the making of ‘Gaslands,’ ” he said.

The film includes more than a dozen residents, energy officials and environmental experts with Shelly DePue conducting many of the interviews examining the impact of deep drilling and fracking .

DePue is a Susquehanna County science teacher, a mother, grandmother and farmer, who decided to take a closer look at natural gas after she learned her property was sitting atop the Marcellus play.

“When we were told we had natural gas under our farm, we felt very blessed,” DuPue said. “But that excitement was tempered somewhat by the negative stories we had heard about hydraulic fracking .”

The making of “Gaslands” started in northeastern Pennsylvania and traveled to Texas.

One memorable scene included setting faucet water - loaded with methane - on fire, an indication of the shallow-lying gas.

“Truthland” is using the same approach, Tucker said.

“We have our own flammable faucet in an area where there is no oil or gas drilling anywhere close,” he said. “It’s methane gas and it’s a natural phenomenon.”

“Truthland” is showing this month in northwestern Pennsylvania and will come to selected venues in the southwestern part of the state in mid-July, Tucker said.

Drilling won't threaten Pa. parks, officials say

Vindicator (Youngstown, OH) - Sunday, June 17, 2012

Author: Jeanne Starmack, Vindicator, Youngstown, Ohio

June 17--ELLWOOD CITY, Pa. -- Not far from each other, alongside the natural wonder called the Slippery Rock Creek Gorge, are a man-made feature and one made by the glaciers.

Driving out from Ellwood City along Breakneck Bridge Road in Perry Township, you'll see the man-made one first.

A Marcellus Shale gas well site, owned by Shell Western Exploration and Production, sits at the back of a farm field, one of a handful of such sites in Lawrence County. More are expected throughout the county's mostly rural landscape.

Shell is one of several companies that have been drilling into the Marcellus across the state since 2006. They use a controversial technique called hydraulic fracturing , which releases gas from the shale thousands of feet below the ground.

Environmentalists and community activists have protested " fracking ," in which horizontal drills can bore through the shale about a mile away from a well site. Then a mixture of water, sand and chemicals blasts cracks in the shale to release the gas. The chemicals in fracking fluid have included some that would be hazardous to the environment and to humans, such as benzene. People living near well sites have complained their well water was polluted by the chemicals or by natural-gas migration. Accidents at well sites have also posed a threat to surface water. A blowout at a Chesapeake Energy well in Bradford County in April 2011 spewed fracking fluid across farmland and into a nearby creek.

A quarter of a mile farther down Breakneck Bridge Road from the Perry Township gas-well site, you'll see a sign for Cleland Rock. A left turn down a gravel road lined with cornfields and trees, then some careful treading down a set of natural steps formed by the roots of some huge maples takes you to the rock -- a flat, 80-square-foot piece of sandstone overlooking a seemingly endless green-leaf canopy that dips sharply down to the center of the 400-foot-deep gorge.

The view is breathtaking, and worth protecting. There is no fracking going on underneath the gorge -- fracking is not allowed under any state park land, said Terry Brady, deputy press secretary for the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

At the gas-well site, however, a pad that is permitted for three wells sits 100 feet from state park property, where the sides of the gorge descend to the pristine Slippery Rock Creek.

One of the wells is drilled and fracking is under way, said John Poister, spokesman for the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. Work has started on a second well.

What would happen if a well casing failed, or a blowout threatened the watershed or the creek?

Poister said the DEP regularly inspects the wells, even when they are capped, to make sure no failed casings could allow fracking fluid or natural gas to migrate to ground water.

Brady said it would be the DEP's job to mitigate pollution from an accident such as a blowout.

The DCNR, which manages Pennsylvania's 129 state parks, gives 100 percent priority to public safety, Brady said.

Each park has an individualized evacuation plan, he said, with "a clear chain of command" to get the word out to campers or others in the park.

"We have an elite ranger force and access to ATVs, and word-of-mouth," he said. "You do the best you can."

Poister said state law requires companies to construct wells to prevent blowouts, fires, explosions or "loss of well control."

Operators are also required to have "Pollution Prevent and Control" plans, which document how they would respond to spills and emergencies.

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission also would get involved, Brady said.

The view from Cleland Rock is not the only one worth saving -- "All our parks are special," Brady pointed out.

Memo: --- (c)2012 Vindicator (Youngstown, Ohio)

ADDRESSING POTENTIAL MARCELLUS SHALE EARTHQUAKES Report : Drilling should proceed , to learn 'best practices'

Charleston Gazette (WV) - Saturday, June 16, 2012

Author: Ken Ward Jr. Staff writer

Government and industry need to conduct more research and come up with "best practices" to address the potential for earthquakes associated with the nation's natural gas drilling boom, a major federal study reported Friday.

The National Research Council said the practice of hydraulic fracturing to release gas reserves is, by itself, not a major risk for triggering "seismic events" large enough for humans to feel.

Of greater concern, the council said, is underground injection of wastewater from the increased drilling in formations such as the Marcellus Shale and the proposed injection deep underground of carbon dioxide emitted by coal-fired power plants.

Still, seismic events traced to various energy production activities - from Marcellus drilling to coal mining - amounted to only 154 worldwide during the past century, compared to a global average of about 14,450 earthquakes every year, the report said.

Because of the timing, though, Friday's report did not consider more recent peer-reviewed science, especially an April paper by a U.S. Geological Survey expert who said he found a "remarkable increase" in the rate of earthquakes. USGS seismologist William Ellsworth said these changes were "almost certainly manmade" and linked to "either changes in extraction methodologies or the rate of oil and gas production."

In West Virginia, industry officials and state regulators have dismissed any connection between the gas-drilling boom and a string of small earthquakes recorded in Braxton County in 2010. Citizen groups in that area, and other parts of the state impacted by the Marcellus rush, have included potential quakes among their lists of concerns.

The new report was written by a panel of experts appointed by the National Research Council, which is part of the National Academy of Science, a nonprofit that provides scientific advice to the government.

According to the report, gas-drilling and related activities can lead to human-induced earthquakes when those activities cause changes in fluid pressures or in underground stresses, especially in areas where there are geologic faults.

However, the report says even experts don't have enough information to reliably predict when this can happen.

"While the general mechanisms that created induced seismic events are well understood, we are currently unable to accurately predict the magnitude or occurrence of such events due to the lack of comprehensive data on complex natural rock systems and the lack of validated predictive models," the report said.

Also, the report said current regulations and practices don't necessarily go far enough.

For example, it said, some drilling-wastewater injection wells "normally do not have a detailed geologic review performed and often data are not available to make such a review.

"Thus, although fluid pressure in the injection zone and the fracturing pressure of the injection zone can be measured after the disposal well is drilled, the location of possible faults is often not known as part of

standard well siting and drilling procedures," the report said.

The report urges closer monitoring and development of new guidelines, but says more drilling and related activities will have to be used to come up with such protocols.

"Practices that consider induced seismicity both before and during the actual operation of an energy project can be employed in the development of a 'best practices' protocol specific to each energy technology and site location," the report said.

chip ellis Saturday Gazette-Mail file photo

About 100 people gather last July on the Capitol's north steps to protest Marcellus Shale drilling in the Mountain State.

Reach Ken Ward Jr. at kward@wvgazette.com or 304-348-1702.

Loose link in fracking as earthquake cause

Wichita Falls Times Record News (TX) - Saturday, June 16, 2012

Author: Seth Borenstein

- Man-made tremors rare, study finds

Associated Press

WASHINGTON - The controversial practice of hydraulic fracturing to extract natural gas does not pose a high risk for triggering earthquakes large enough to feel, but other types of energy-related drilling can make the ground noticeably shake, a major government science report concludes.

Even those man-made tremors large enough to be an issue are very rare, says a special report by the National Research Council. In more than 90 years of monitoring, human activity has been shown to trigger just 154 quakes, most of them moderate or small, and only 60 of them in the United States. That's compared with a global average of about 14,450 earthquakes of magnitude 4.0 or greater every year, said the report, released Friday.

Most of those are caused by gas and oil drilling the conventional way, damming rivers, deep injections of wastewater and purposeful flooding. Only two worldwide instances of shaking - a magnitude 2.8 tremor in Oklahoma and a 2.3 magnitude shaking in England - can be attributed to hydraulic fracturing, a specific method of extracting gas by injection of fluids sometimes called "fracking," the report said. Both were last year.

Task force looks at water source protection efforts

Daily Press, The (St. Marys, PA) - Friday, June 15, 2012

Author: Victoria Stanish, Editor

RIDGWAY -Steps to strengthen source water protection were discussed at an Elk County Gas Task Force meeting earlier this week.

Jodi Foster, community and economic development coordinator for the Elk County Planning Department, said Watershed Specialist Kim Bonfardine is ready to start source water monitoring in Brockway. She noted that although Brockway is in Jefferson County and not in Elk County, the reason for the monitoring is because much of Brockway's source water stems from Elk County.

Foster also met recently with Elk County Emergency Management Coordinator Mike McAllister, not present at the meeting due to business in Harrisburg, and Jake Moore from the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), to discuss creating a source water protection "layer" on the county's 9-1-1 maps.

" What we're attempting to do is to create a layer that's going to go on the 9-1-1 system that will show when there's an accident or some incident that occurs, if it's in a source water protection 9-1-1 area, it will pop up and alert the 9-1-1 operator that this is a source water protection area, and to notify the proper people," Foster said. "It doesn't necessarily have to be for Marcellus Shale.

" Source water protection is all about public education and trying to make the public aware that there are types of water systems around. There's groundwater sources and there's surface water sources and what the difference is, and to help educate the public about how important it is to protect their drinking water supply. The conversation's started and people are talking about it now, and that will hopefully help prevent accidents and stuff like that from happening." In other news: Jim Clark, extension educator with PSU Cooperative Extension in McKean County, said the Potter County Gas Task Force is now the Potter County Natural Resource Center.

Its website, at www.naturalgasresourcecenter.com.

com, has a map of both drilled and spudded wells and a production map. The site also has other information, including upcoming presentations that are open to the public.

" It's a really userfriendly thing," Clark said of the website.

Kris Kronenwetter, task force member and executive director of the Community Education Council of Elk and Cameron Counties, said the new Energy Technology Education Center in Williamsport is providing training for both emergency responders and potential and current workers in the oil and gas industry. The center is a collaboration between the Lycoming County Department of Public Safety and the Pennsylvania College of Technology.

Task force member and St. Marys City Councilman Dan Hepner said DEP released a new manual regarding waste water use in hydraulic fracturing on May 12.

" Basically, what's coming out of your waste water treatment plant is now specifically targeted for use for hydraulic fracturing if you meet certain standards," he said. "Part of the problem in the past was that waste water was considered residual waste, which, with that tag on it, meant you had to do a lot of different things.

The big push [now] is, why not use water from waste water treatment plants as opposed to using fresh water?" Hepner said he will continue to monitor developments in this area.

Water companies partner with fracking lobby

Hays Daily News, The (KS) - Friday, June 15, 2012
By SOFIA RESNICK

Two of the country's largest private water utility companies are participants in a massive lobbying effort to expand controversial shale gas drilling - a heavy industrial activity that promises to enrich the water companies but may also put drinking water resources at risk.

The situation - which some watchdogs describe as a troubling conflict of interest - underscores the complex issues raised by the nationwide push to privatize infrastructure and services like water, prisons and roads.

The water companies - American Water and Aqua America - are leading drinking water suppliers in Pennsylvania, where drilling is booming. They also sell water to gas companies - which use a drilling technique that requires massive amounts of water - and have expressed interest in treating drilling wastewater, a potentially lucrative opportunity.

These investor-owned, publicly traded water utility companies are also dues-paying "associate members" of the gas industry's powerful Marcellus Shale Coalition, a fact confirmed by coalition spokesman Travis Windle, who says associate members pay \$15,000 annually in dues. "Our associate members are really

the backbone of the industry," adds Windle.

Both water companies serve millions of people across the country - Aqua America operates in 11 states and American Water in more than 30.

The coalition, which is led by major gas producers, contends that "responsible development of natural gas" will bolster the region's economy while providing an important source of domestic energy. It has reported more than \$2 million in Pennsylvania lobbying expenditures since 2010.

Shale gas drillers use a combination of horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking," to extract gas in the Marcellus formation. The controversial technique forces millions of gallons of water - mixed with sand and chemicals - into the ground to crack the shale rock and release gas. In addition to the potential risks posed by actual fracturing, the process produces toxic wastewater that can be difficult to dispose of safely.

The Environmental Protection Agency is currently conducting a congressionally mandated study of the "potential adverse impact that hydraulic fracturing may have on water quality and public health."

In the meantime, the water companies are selling water to the drillers while calling for fracking to be done in an environmentally responsible manner. In a presentation to investors last month, American Water stated that it is "realizing additional revenues from water sales to drilling companies while remaining vigilant in protecting our water sources."

(Some public water utilities also sell to drillers too, but no public utilities are part of the Marcellus Shale Coalition.)

American Water spokesman Terry Maenza says the company is also a member of numerous environmental groups and that its support for environmental protection is unchanged by its role in the shale coalition.

"By the nature of our business, we will continue to be stewards of the environment, ensuring water source protection," says Maenza.

Aqua America executive Karl Kyriss says his company's involvement in the coalition helps protect water resources.

"By participating, we can have some direct input into the group that is supporting development of the Marcellus Shale," says Kyriss. "But we are very much committed that it be done in an environmentally sensitive and protected manner. And we think we can do that better from the inside than just sort of watching what happens."

But environmental advocates see potential conflicts between the interests of the private water industry and the interests of drinking water consumers.

"If American Water and Aqua America wanted to ensure that their water supplies were protected, they would support a national ban on hydraulic fracturing for shale gas," argues Mary Grant, a researcher at Food and Water Watch, which has reported on Aqua America's ties to the coalition. "But, instead of acting on the precautionary principle, they are paying thousands of dollars a year to an industry coalition that advocates for shale gas development, despite the risks to water quality."

"We are concerned that these relationships encourage investor owned water utilities to endorse shale gas development despite its risk to public water supplies," Grant says.

Eric Goldstein, a senior attorney for the Natural Resources Defense Council, adds, "Sometimes the interests of private ownership are inconsistent with the concept of preserving our water resources in the public trust for future generations. And the potential clashing of those interests is why these questions have been raised about whether for-profit companies ought to be running public water supplies."

Sofia Resnick writes for the American Independent, a nonprofit newsroom that funds and publishes independent investigative journalism. editor@americanindependent.com

GROUP BACKS SHALE DRILLING

Times Union, The (Albany, NY) - Wednesday, June 13, 2012

Author: RICK KARLIN

ALBANY -- Members of the Women's Energy Leadership Coalition from jobs-hungry upstate regions appeared Tuesday at the Capitol to support natural gas development as a way to increase growth.

The gathering of Southern Tier and Central New York residents was designed to send the message to lawmakers as well as Gov. Andrew Cuomo that shale gas drilling has supporters, participants said.

"The people in this group have really felt disenfranchised for the past four years," said Karen Moreau, executive director of the state Petroleum Council, which joined the Independent Oil & Gas Association in backing the effort.

The natural gas reserves held in the Marcellus and Utica shale formations in the economically depressed areas has drawn keen interest from natural gas companies offering landowners cash for drilling leases.

The operators want to use hydraulic fracturing , in which pressurized, chemically treated water is used to extract gas deposits from the rock.

The controversial technique, known as hydrofracking , has eclipsed almost every other environmental issue as the state Department of Environmental Conservation finalizes a set of regulations to control its use.

Opponents say the process, already in operation in neighboring Pennsylvania and other states, is unsafe because it has polluted drinking water, tainted watersheds and endangered the public health.

The gathering -- the latest by pro- fracking voices -- was meant to rebut the protests. Some who participated spoke of the need for jobs and economic development in rural areas.

Others said they feared criticism from neighbors who oppose hydrofracking .

"I got very strong pushback and was quiet for a while," said Uni Blake, a toxicologist and environmental scientist who lives near Cooperstown in Otsego County.

Blake has spoken on behalf of the drillers association at legislative hearings on hydrofracking .

The need for jobs and economic development prompted her to speak out, Blake said.

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Project near Utah canyon 'environmentally appropriate' -- Salazar

Scott Streater, E&E reporter Energy & Environment News PM Published: Monday, June 18, 2012

The Obama administration today formally approved a major new natural gas drilling project in northeast Utah against strong opposition from some Democratic leaders and environmentalists who say the drilling will significantly degrade a remote and scenic canyon area.

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar signed a record of decision (ROD) authorizing Denver-based Gasco Energy Inc. to drill nearly 1,300 wells in the next 15 years across more than 206,000 acres of mostly federal land in the already heavily drilled Uinta Basin.

The ROD comes nearly two years after U.S. EPA ripped the Bureau of Land Management's initial draft

review of the project for inadequately analyzing its effects on air and water quality, and the final document approved today is the result of more than a year of revisions working closely with EPA and the Fish and Wildlife Service to avoid environmental and cultural impacts.

The revisions included scaling back the number of natural gas wells at the project site from nearly 1,500 wells in parts of Uintah and Duchesne counties to a maximum of 1,298 wells. The final proposal would also cut by nearly half the size of evaporation ponds that contain drilling waste and emit air pollutants -- to 78 acres from 143 acres.

The latest proposal calls for using more directional drilling techniques to avoid the sensitive Nine Mile Canyon area, though critics say the revised plan could still affect the Desolation Canyon wilderness study area -- a major issue of contention for environmentalists.

"As we move forward with President Obama's all-of-the-above energy strategy, we must strive for balanced, environmentally appropriate development of our nation's energy resources," Salazar said in a statement. "This plan reflects our commitment to responsibly address public concerns regarding resource and land use issues in the Uinta Basin area. Working together with Gasco Energy, Inc., we have made substantial improvements to protect land and water resources, safeguarding iconic areas such as Desolation and Nine Mile Canyons, while supporting Utah's economy and reducing our dependence on foreign oil."

Utah Rep. Rob Bishop (R), chairman of the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands, said, "While these new leases took far too long to be approved, amounting to what is the better part of a decade, I am grateful that the administration recognized the importance of utilizing the abundant energy resources that exist within the Basin."

But Salazar's decision drew a sharp rebuke from environmentalists who say BLM and other federal agencies never worked with them to address long-standing concerns about the drilling project's impacts to Desolation Canyon, which contains lands with wilderness characteristics.

As a result, the approved project plan is not much of an improvement over the initial proposal, said Steve Bloch, an attorney with the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA).

"If you put lipstick on a pig, it's still a pig, and this project is a pig," Bloch said.

Bloch and others say that BLM has already approved more than 1,000 oil and gas drilling permits in Utah that sit unused, and that there's no reason to drill anywhere near the canyon region. And Salazar's claim that the project will avoid Desolation Canyon rings hollow because the project will affect the portion of Green River running through the canyon.

"The fact the activity is 5 miles away from the canyon is irrelevant," he said. "The issue has always been the proximity to the Desolation Canyon portion of the Green River and the Desolation Canyon proposed wilderness area, which is going to be significantly damaged as a result of the project."

Sharon Buccino, who directs the Natural Resources Defense Council's land and wildlife program, said adding nearly 1,300 new wells to the Uinta Basin will exacerbate the region's wintertime ozone problem, aggravating its "already-unenviable status as one of the most polluted regions in America."

Salazar's decision was also ripped by Rep. Maurice Hinchey (D-N.Y.), who led an effort in April to persuade Salazar to reduce the drilling project's footprint near Desolation Canyon (Greenwire, April 11). Hinchey is the lead sponsor of "America's Red Rock Wilderness Act," which would protect about 9 million acres of BLM wilderness in Utah, including Desolation Canyon.

Hinchey said in a statement today that Salazar ignored "the counsel of myself and several other members of Congress" with "this irresponsible decision" that he said will result in destroying the wilderness-quality landscapes in the canyon.

"The wild public lands of Desolation Canyon are a national treasure that belong to the American people and should be protected for generations to come," he said.

Art of compromise

The decision comes on the heels of Salazar's approval last month of Houston-based Anadarko Petroleum Corp.'s Greater Natural Buttes Area Gas Development Project, which calls for drilling up to 3,675 new natural gas wells over a 10-year period inside a nearly 163,000-acre section of the Uinta Basin that is managed by BLM.

That project was praised by environmentalists after Anadarko subsidiary Kerr-McGee Oil & Gas Onshore LP formally committed the company to pollution reduction strategies, including implementing technologies designed to capture or reduce fugitive emissions of natural gas and other pollutants that contribute to the Uinta Basin's air quality problems.

Anadarko officials also met with SUWA and separately committed to limit the number of wells in and around wilderness-quality lands along the White River and to purchase and preserve private lands along the river corridor.

Juan Palma, BLM's Utah state director, said the evaluation of the Gasco project followed a similar collaborative process.

"Together, we worked with Gasco to step up and find ways to minimize impacts to wildlife habitat, air quality and other resources in the Uinta Basin while harnessing important energy resources for our nation," Palma said in a statement.

But Bloch, the SUWA attorney, said none of the agencies worked with conservation groups concerned about the project's impact. And he said Salazar's approval of the ROD "is wholly inconsistent" with the Greater Natural Buttes agreement, which Salazar touted last month as a "historic agreement" during a signing ceremony in Salt Lake City where he signed the ROD (Greenwire, May 8).

"With this [Gasco] decision, the secretary's rhetoric of a collaborative approach to tackling difficult problems has fallen flat," he said. "It's a very disappointing decision from the Interior Department."

Click here to read the ROD. http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/vernal/planning/nepa_.html

Streater writes from Colorado Springs, Colo.

Successful fracking for Xtreme Oil & Gas

Penn Energy 06/18/2012

<http://www.pennenergy.com/index/petroleum/display/0970189382/articles/pennenergy/petroleum/exploration/2012/june/successful-fracking.html?cmpid=EnlDailyPetroJune192012>

The company has successfully completed hydraulic fracturing activities at its Kansas oil field.

Caerus to acquire Oklahoma oil assets

Penn Energy 06/18/2012

http://www.pennenergy.com/index/petroleum/display/7423164685/articles/pennenergy/petroleum/finance/2012/june/caerus-to_acquire.html?cmpid=EnlDailyPetroJune192012

Caerus Oil and Gas has purchased the Texas County, Oklahoma oil and gas assets of a major U.S. independent energy company for an undisclosed amount.

American Energy finalizes White-tail prospect acquisition

Penn Energy 06/18/2012

http://www.pennenergy.com/index/petroleum/display/0966351005/articles/pennenergy/petroleum/exploration/2012/june/american-energy_development.html?cmpid=EnlDailyPetroJune192012

The 4,000 acre prospect is located in northern Michigan.

Rangeland sends first Bakken crude from rail terminal

Oil & Gas Journal 06/11/2012

<http://www.ogj.com/articles/2012/06/rangeland-ships-first-bakken-crude-from-rail-terminal.html?sponsored=topic6&cmpid=EnILNGJune192012>

Rangeland Energy LLC, Sugar Land, Tex., sent its first 120-car unit train from its COLT open-access crude oil marketing terminal in the North Dakota portion of the Bakken shale.

North Dakota: Fort Berthold 3C-3D survey starting

Oil & Gas Journal 06/13/2012

<http://www.ogj.com/articles/2012/06/north-dakota-fort-berthold-3c-3d-survey-starting.html?sponsored=topic6&cmpid=EnILNGJune192012>

3D Geophysical Inc., Houston, has reached agreement with the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Reservation to conduct a three component 3D seismic survey covering 1,000 sq miles of the reservation.

Rosneft, ExxonMobil eye Bazhenov, Achimov tight oil

Oil & Gas Journal 06/15/2012

<http://www.ogj.com/articles/2012/06/rosneft-exxonmobil-eye-bazhenov-achimov-tight-oil.html?sponsored=topic6&cmpid=EnILNGJune192012>

Rosneft and ExxonMobil Corp. have signed agreements to jointly develop tight oil reserves in Western Siberia, Russia, and establish a joint Arctic Research Center for Offshore Developments.

Eagle Ford oil pipeline due July start-up

Oil & Gas Journal 06/08/2012

<http://www.ogj.com/articles/2012/06/eagle-ford-oil-pipeline-due-july-start-up.html?sponsored=topic6&cmpid=EnILNGJune192012>

Enterprise Products Partners LP has begun accepting deliveries for and commissioning the first phase of its Eagle Ford crude oil pipeline between Wilson County and Sealy, Tex. (OGJ Online, Sept. 1, 2010).

Court Upholds FERC Review Of New Shale Gas Pipeline

BY CHAD WOODWORTH IHS The Energy Daily 06/18/2012

A federal appeals court this week refused to order the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to conduct a broader environmental review of a proposed natural gas pipeline in northern Pennsylvania, brushing aside assertions by environmentalists that federal law required the commission to examine the impacts of expanded shale gas drilling made possible in the region by the increased...[fee for full text]

Study concludes hydraulic fracturing poses low earthquake risk

Oil & Gas Journal 06/18/2012

<http://www.ogj.com/articles/2012/06/study-concludes-hydraulic-fracturing-poses-low-earthquake-risk.html?cmpid=EnIDailyJune182012>

Hydraulic fracturing has a low risk for inducing earthquakes that can be felt by people but underground injection of wastewater produced by fracing and other energy technologies has a higher risk of causing earthquakes, the National Research Council said in a report released June 15.

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